

REMARKS

Claims 1-24 were pending in the Application. Claims 1-16 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Hence, claims 17-24 are pending.

Applicants cancelled claims 1-16 so as to prosecute all method claims in one patent application. Applicants are not conceding in this application that cancelled claims 1-16 are not patentable over the art cited by the Examiner or are not statutory subject matter. Claims 1-16 were cancelled solely to facilitate expeditious prosecution of the remaining method claims (claims 17-24). Applicants respectfully reserve the right to pursue these (claims 1-16) and other claims in one or more continuation patent applications.

Claims 17-24 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections and file a Notice of Appeal concurrently herewith. Applicants will specifically provide the reasons for traversal in Applicants' Appeal Brief.

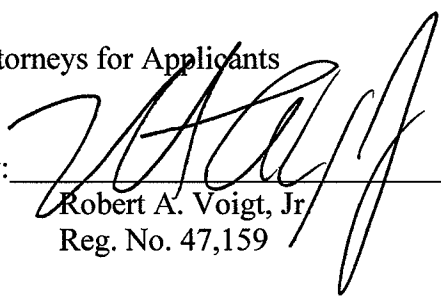
Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner call Applicants' attorney at the below listed number if the Examiner believes that such a discussion would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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